

World's Finest II (Sea and Sky II):

by kerithwyn

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Summary: Robin talks to Dick Grayson about his encounter with Superboy. Slash themes. [Tim/Kon, Dick/Garth]

World's Finest II (Sea and Sky II):

World's Finest II: "But What Does It *Mean?*"

by 'rith (Kerithwyn Jade, kerithwyn@yahoo.com)

Archive: Ask, and ye shall receive. Warnings: Adult topics, M/M slash themes. If this concept disturbs you, read no further. Fandom: Modern comicsverse. Robin talks to Dick Grayson about his encounter with Superboy. A sequel to "World's Finest: Getting to Know You" (<http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Shuttle/8110/Fiction.html>). Also an unofficial sequel to Dannell Lites' "A Sea Change" (<http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Shuttle/4853/Sea.html>). Post-Clench, pre-Cataclysm, pre-Young Justice. Disclaimer: All characters property of DC Comics. What I have done with them is mine.

> The man who answered the door was dark-haired, broad-shouldered, strongly muscled, and naked to the waist. <p>

He wasn't Dick.

He looked down on me with purple (!) eyes and said with an accent I almost recognized, "Yes? Can I help you?"

"I'm Tim Drake, I was looking for Dick Grayson...?"

"Yes, of course." He turned and called over his shoulder. "Richard, there is a young man named Tim Drake to see you!"

Inside the apartment, I saw Dick come out of the bathroom, wearing only a pair of sweatpants and toweling his hair dry. "Hey, Tim, come in! What brings you to Blüdhaven?"

I stepped into the front room. "I wanted to talk to you, but if this is, uh, a bad time..." I didn't want to start talking about private stuff in front of this guy...whoever he was.

Dick saw my hesitation. "Oh, sorry. Tim, this is Garth, an old friend of mine." He smiled. "You'd probably recognize him as Tempest."

"Sure, the Titan!" *Now* I recognized the accent-Atlantean, like Aquaman's. "You used to be Aqualad, right?"

Dick snorted. Garth shook his head and said, "There, do you see? I will always be 'Aqualad,' just as part of you will always remain...oh." He stopped abruptly.

"S'okay, Garth, Tim knows it all."

"Ah. Forgive me, this business of secret identities is still strange, even after all these years. But as I have said before, 'Robin' is still a part of you, my friend."

Dick trusted this guy. That was enough for me. "I like that new costume, Garth. Real, uh, striking."

"Thank you." He paused, then said, "I can see you have things to discuss with Richard. Are you hungry?"

"Uh..."

Dick laughed. "Better say 'yes,' kid. Garth makes the best vegetarian stir-fry I've ever had."

"Sure, okay."

"All right, then: you talk, I cook." He smiled warmly at Dick and disappeared into the kitchen.

"Grab a seat, Tim." Dick snagged a sweatshirt from the edge of a chair and sat down. "What's up?"

Oh, boy. Talk about strangetiming; here I'd come to talk to Dick about...what I'd come to talk about, and he was...he was.... I had to ask.

"Uh, Dick, tell me to take a flying leap if I'm out of line here, but you and Garth are...?"

He smiled like a cheshire cat. "Friends."

I blushed. "Uh, right. Never mind."

"Sorry. I'm still getting used to this, myself." His wry expression spoke volumes.

"Does...does Bruce know?"

He snorted again. "What *doesn't* he know? But I haven't told him, if that's what you're asking, and he hasn't said anything to me."

"I thought..."

"What?"

"Well, you and Kory...."

"A different part of my life. I still...love her. Always will. But it's not the same as it was." He was quiet for a minute, and then he said, "But you came down here to talk to *me* about something, right?"

"It's kinda related...."

"Girl troubles? Steph giving you grief again?"

"Uh, no." God, I'd barely thought about her recently. "I, uh, something happened I wanted to talk to you about..."

He sat back. "You can tell me anything, Tim. You know that."

"Yeah, but this is hard." I took a deep breath. "You know Superboy, right? He helped me with Metallo and Poison Ivy, a couple of weeks ago."

"Heard about that. Also heard that he stopped them *himself,* down in the islands, but I guessed there had to be more, since Metallo first showed up in Gotham."

"Right. He trashed Metallo, then Ivy whammied *Superboy* and took off for Kauai, so I had to follow. Metallo pulled himself together and came after us. We got real lucky." I shook my head. "*Real* lucky."

"And?"

"Well...Superboy showed up a couple of days later. He said he came to thank me for my help, and then he..." I gulped. "He, uh...kissed me."

You could have made a cast from Dick's face; he didn't so much as blink. "What did you do?"

"I was really stunned, I mean, I never thought of doing anything with another guy...." I looked for a reaction from Dick, but he just motioned for me to go on. The rest came out in one long breath.

"But it was kinda nice, so I let him do it again, and then we flew over to that old resort island and, uh, fooled around. Touching and stuff. You know." My face was burning so hard I was sure I was gonna burst into flame.

Thank God he didn't laugh, or show even a trace of a smirk. I would've died right there. "So you're wondering what it all means."

"Yeah." Sometimes it's great that Dick acquired Batman's detective instincts. They saved me from having to explain everything.

"I think it means...whatever you want it to mean." He held up a hand

to stop me, because I must've looked annoyed. "No, wait, let me finish. I can't tell you what it means to *you,* but maybe I can help you figure it out, okay?"

"...yeah, all right." Should've known it wouldn't be that simple.

"I'm guessing you didn't hate it, or you wouldn't be here. So now your whole world-view just got dumped on its ass, and you're wondering if you're gay."

There was that insight again. Great, but uncomfortable to think he could read me so easily. Was I *ever* gonna learn how to do that? "You...pretty much got it in one."

"One encounter doesn't make a lifestyle, Tim. Not even two or three. It's a lot more about what you're *feeling,* than what your body does." *Now* he grinned. "I remember what it was like at your age. A stiff breeze, and...."

I covered my face, embarrassed. "Geez..."

"It also doesn't help that you're a teenager in the business we're in."

"Huh?"

"Well...we all handle the stress differently. Sometimes it's easy to get caught up in the heat of the moment. You're throwing yourself into danger, trusting to someone else to watch your back, and that creates an instant bond. Things get exciting, you take down the threat together, and suddenly there's all this *energy* left over and nothing left to do with it."

I thought that over, then realized something. "Is that what happened with you and-"

He interrupted, glowering. "We're not talking about me, here. Give that one a rest, Tim."

Bingo. Interesting. "But what happened with Superboy, that was a couple of days later...."

"So? Those emotions don't go away. I could tell you stories-" he paused. "But I won't. Let's just say, it's sometimes easy for things to get out of hand."

"Then...that's all it was?" Maybe....

"I can't answer that. I mean, you're both young and hormonal-I'd be more surprised if something like this *hadn't* happened, sooner or later. Even regular kids go through this stuff, Tim. You'll survive."

"Terrific."

"Don't agonize over it, that's all. Whatever it means to you, learn from it and go on. You're a level-headed guy, you'll be all right."

I had things to think about, if nothing else. "Okay. Thanks."

"Sure. Anything else?"

"No, not right now." I looked at him curiously. "Can I ask you a question, though?"

He nodded. "You're wondering about Garth."

I stared at him. "How do you **do** that?!"

"Practice." He winked, then looked toward the kitchen. "Garth...has been alone for a very long time. We need this, both of us." Dick went on, more to himself than to me. "It's about companionship, and comfort, and friendship."

"Is...that all there is? I mean, all I should expect?"

He looked at me sharply. "No! And I don't think you believe that, either. Super-hero or not, it **is** possible to find someone you really love. But-" he smiled a little, "I probably shouldn't say this to you, but you don't always have to wait it out alone."

Then I said just the wrong thing. "Bruce doesn't-"

"**Bruce** isn't-" he said harshly, and then stopped. He took a deep breath and went on, more quietly. "Bruce has shut himself off from a lot of things he probably shouldn't." He sighed. "Listen, Tim, I'm not trying to tell you what's right or wrong for you, I'm telling you what I've seen and what works for me. You have to make your own decisions. Just...be careful, all right? I mean, Roy ended up with a daughter by an international assassin, for cripes' sake. Lian's a doll, but...."

Before I could answer, Garth's voice rang out. "Robbie, Tim, lunch is ready whenever you are!"

I looked at Dick, questioning. "'Robbie'?!"

Dick shook his head. "Ah, old Titans stuff. We'll be there in a minute, Gillhead!" he shouted back.

I laughed. I couldn't help it.

"Yeah, yeah. Just you wait 'til you're leading a team, and see what kind of grief you get."

"**That'll** be the day." No way. Just being Robin kept me busy enough.

Dick smiled like he knew something I didn't. "Oh, you will. Just wait and see. But now, I'm hungry. You coming?"

We went into the kitchen, and Garth was wearing two things I hadn't seen when he opened the door: one of Dick's "Haley's Circus" T-shirts, and two parallel scars that curved down over his left eye. He saw me glance at that and said, "The spell has worn off, I have not had the chance to refresh it."

"Spell?"

He nodded, pulling down plates from the cupboard. "A small illusion. I am not much of a mage, but enough to disguise the scars for my friends' comfort, or for company."

A real magician! Too cool. "Oh, it doesn't bother me! I mean, you don't have to..."

He smiled. "Then I will not. I was simply practicing, in any case."

While we ate, I kept sneaking glances at Dick. He and Garth took turns telling old Titans stories, stuff from when they first got together as a team. Neat stuff, but I was more interested in how **relaxed** Dick seemed. Every time he and Bruce work together, you can cut the tension with a knife. I mean, they obviously love and respect each other, but it's like this constant battle.

His friendship-or **whatever**-with Garth was on this whole other level, really comfortable. Seeing Dick so at ease was...pretty cool, actually.

About halfway through the meal, Garth excused himself and I heard the shower start up. Before I could even start wondering, Dick said, "He's an Atlantean, after all. He needs to stay hydrated to breathe on land. Gonna be hell on my water bills."

"Oh." Then, so I didn't sound like a total idiot, "You, uh, seem really happy."

"Yeah." He paused, fork halfway to mouth, and said, "Y'know, in all the stuff I said before, I didn't once mention you could always think about **waiting....**"

I stared at him, too weirded out to blush. "God, Dick, not **that** sex talk, not from you!"

He snickered. "Okay, you're right. Sorry."

Garth came back in, and we all talked a bit more about those old Titans stories before I had to leave.

Dick walked me to the door. "Tim," he told me, "just use your head." He tapped his forehead. "**This** one." I felt my face go red again, and he laughed. "But don't forget to listen to your heart, either."

Right. A **lot** to think about.

But the next time I saw Kon-El, that all flew out the window.

End
file.